of British and foreign shipping in 1915 would be 37 million tons, and the Committee proceeded to face the question of how we could best arrange to meet the hardship involved in foregoing about 25 per cent. of the imports we had obtained—nearly 50 million tons—in the previous year.

The Shipping Control Committee did not put forward a list of the items which should be totally

Committee's or Partially prohibited to achieve this

proposals for result. They made, instead, a list of the

planned items of food and raw materials and other

restrictions essential commodities which they con-

sidered we should have to import. These, they proposed, should be imported on the 1915 scale, except in the case of timber and paper and paper-

making materials, where they suggested definite cuts —of 1,000,000 tons of timber and 800,000 tons of

paper and paper-making materials. Subject to these cuts, their list of essential imports totalled 35,375,000

tons. A margin was thus left of 1,635,000 tons to

complete the possible 37 million tons of imports,

and they proposed that everything outside their list

should be prohibited, beyond a few miscellaneous

necessary articles which might be covered by the

million odd tons of the margin.

The plan was a somewhat blunt and crude one. Sir Arthur Salter says of it :—

" A reduction of this kind and on this scale,
effected by direct and absolute

prohibition, would have had incalculable results upon the unexamined and omic system of the country, and the information and preparatory work behind the recommendation were clearly not sufficient